THE LINE OF TRUE JUDGMENT:

Laid to an imperfect piece publiſhed

By *Thomas Collier*, which he calls an Anſwer to an Epiſtle written to the Churches of the *Anabaptiſts*, &c.

A Reply herein is publiſhed in order

to the Exaltation of the ſpiritual man, with his Ordinances and Adminiſtrations, above the man of ſin, with the weak and unprofitable Ordices that doth not make the comers thereunto perfect.

BY

Thomas Salthouſe.

Behold ye deſpiſers and wonder and periſh, for I work a work in your dayes, a work which ye ſhall in no wiſe believe, though a man declare it unto you, Acts 13. 41.

Therefore they ſay unto God, depart from us, for we deſire not the knowledge of thy wayes, Job 21. 14.

They are of thoſe that rebell againſt the light, they know not the wayes thereof, nor abide in the pathes thereof, Job 24. 13.

LONDON,
Printed for *Thomas Simmons*, at the Bull and Mouth near *Alderſgate*.

THe Reader may here obſerve, that the firſt entrance into this diſcourſe, was occaſioned by a printed Paper from Tiverton; wherein the ſtate and condition, of the Anabaptiſts Churches was repreſented, which came to my hand; and after I had read it over and conſidered their condition to be far ſhort of what they profeſs, I was moved to write an Epiſtle to them, and ſent it among them, for the better information of the honeſt-hearted, and for the ſake of ſuch as are not altogether ſettled upon the lees; and as an anſwer to that Epiſtle, Thomas Collier hath written a Pamphlet to vindecate their practiſe and preſent condition, ſhewing them many examples and inſtances of the Saints failings in former ages tending to their incouragment in the eſtate of ſin and imperfection; intimating that notwithſtanding their great abominations therein expreſſed, they are, and may be owned as the Church of God, in perſuance whereof I was conſtrained to ſend this reply, as a farther manifeſtation of the good will of him that would have all men to be ſaved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, with a ſeaſonable word written by J.C. added hereunto, which may go abroad among them to be read, received, and conſidered of by ſuch as have not refuſed to Return.

T. S.

DEVONSHIRE HOUSE
Friends Reference
Library
12 BISHOPSGATE WITHOUT &c.

The line of true Judgement laid to an imperfect piece published by Thomas Collier, *which he calls an Answer to an Epistle written to the Churches of the* Anabaptists, *&c.*

WHen I consider the gross darknes degeneration and Apostacy of some high pretenders to Religion: and how willfully ignorant they are become of the great mistery of Godlines *b* not liking to retain God in their knowledge, nor to hearken to the reproofs of instruction, which is the way of eternal life. I remember what the spirit hath expresly spoken concerning such *c* that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith; giving heed to seducing spirits and Doctrines of Divels; speaking lies in hypocrisie, having their consciences seared as with an hot Iron; making Shipwrack of the mystery of faith *d* which is held in a pure conscience, and which was once delivered unto the Saints which purifies the heart and gives victory over the world, and after a diligent search and examination had, who it is that are given up to strong delusions to believe lies, and who teacheth for doctrines the traditions of men; *e* creeping into houses; and leading about silly women Captive, Laden with sin, and led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, nor to perfection; I find by evident testimony, that the people cal'd Anabaptists are as chiefly concerned herein as many of those whom they themselves have formerly pretended to differ from and declare against as Ante-Christian both in call, practice, maintainance, doctrine and worship, with whom they are

b 1 Tim. 3. 1

c Rom. 1. 28.

d 1 Tim. 4.

e 1 Tim 3. 2.

joyned and confederate to fight againſt the truth as it is in Jeſus, as by their practice and the writings of ſome of them is plainly and clearly made manifeſt; for, with the light of Chriſt are they ſeen through their unrighteous covering and feigned
Eph. 2. 12. humility: and with the Spirit of truth are they tryed, their language bewrayes them *f* to be ſtrangers to the Covenant of promiſe, yea ſuch as cannot indure ſound doctrine, nor receive the things of the ſpirit of God, when in the fear of God freely tendered and offered unto them.

And foraſmuch as *Thomas Collier* a Teacher among them hath ſeveral times ingaged himſelf, with the beaſt and falſe Prophet to make war againſt the Lamb and his followers; by publiſhing his own imaginations to render them odious to the world, Suggeſting their way and worſhip of the true God, to be hereſy and errour, as his forefathers in all ages have done: and now once more under pretence of Anſwering an Epiſtle of mine written in the fear of God, and ſent to them in love, he hath manifeſted much folly, enmity, ignorance, and wickedneſs by wreſting and perverting the words of truth and ſoberneſs therein contained, as he hath done, and doth *g* the Scrip-
2 Pet. 3. 16. ture of truth to his own deſtruction, that he may not be exalted in his wickedneſs; and ſo proceed further to boaſt of what he hath done herein or heretofore againſt the truth and the faithful witneſſes of it.

I am conſtrained for the vindication of the truth in general, whereof I am a witneſs, and for which I ſuffer, a little farther to ſearch into his works of darkneſs, that his covering may be ſtript off, and his refuge of lies ſwept away, that he may
Dan. 7. 9. ſtand naked and bare in the preſence *h* of the ancient of dayes before whom the matter in controverſie is to be debated; and as for what I wrote in that Epiſtle, and do write on this account, it is commended to that of God in the conſcience of all ſuch as are ſimple hearted and ſober minded to be read and received without prejudice, either againſt the truth which is reproached by the world, or againſt the earthen veſſel which is herein imployed as an inſtrument; and who hath without prejudice againſt any particular perſon (though occaſion was given to mention him) made theſe things publique in perſu-

ance

ance of a pamphlet lately publiſhed by *T. C.* called an anſwer to an Epiſtle written by me, to the Churches of the Anabaptiſts ſo called.

When his pretended anſwer was brought to light, and deliberately ſearcht through, and weighed in an equal ballance, the ſcope of his diſcourſe and weight of his arguments was firſt to prove that *they might be the Church of God, notwithſtanding their great abominations and wickedneſs* confeſſed in their Epiſtle from *Tiverton*, with ſeveral inſtances and agravations of the failings of thoſe in former ages whom the Lord ſent his true Prophets and Miniſters to declare againſt, and to call to repentance; and hereby he would imply that the Churches of God in former ages have been ſinful and wicked like themſelves; who profeſs and would be accounted the Church of Chriſt in theſe dayes though imperfect;

Secondly, Againſt the being of the ſeed of God and light of Chriſt within men, thirdly againſt the Saints attaining to perfection and freedom from ſin whilſt in this mortal eſtate which is the very end for which Chriſt Jeſus gave gifts unto his Miniſters, ordaining ſome to be Prophets, ſome Apoſtles, ſome Paſtors, and ſome Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtery, for the edifying of the ſpiritual body till we all come in the unity of the faith unto a perfect man in Chriſt Jeſus, in whom the whole building fitly framed together groweth to an holy temple in the Lord, and the Apoſtle ſaith, *know you not that your bodies are the temples of the holy Ghoſt*, *i* and if any man defile the temple of God, him will God deſtroy, *k* and the Church is in God the Father and in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, where nothing that is unclean can enter, and the tabernacle of God is with men, as he hath ſaid: I'le walk in them and dwell in them, though *T C.* have affirmed that *God never had yet a Church in the world free from ſin*, and ſo hath laid ſin to the charge of Gods Elect, for *l* he that commits ſin is of the Devil and a ſervant of ſin, and ſo free from righteouſneſs, and this is the cauſe he hath undertaken to plead.

i 1 Cor. 3. 17.
k 1 Theſ. 1. 1.
l John. 3. 8.

In the front or enterance into his paper, he hath cited this Scripture, *to the Law and to the teſtimony*, if any ſpeak not according

cording to this rule, it is becauſe there is no light in them. Now in regard he hath put in his declaration, and goes about to plead a title or propriety, that the man of ſin hath and muſt have in the Church of Chriſt whilſt here on earth, and hath here cited the Law and Teſtimony (which I own) for a rule to try by; I am conſtrained as Defendant, to join iſſue and plead with him, according to the Law of Truth, in the preſence of our Judge and Law-giver, whoſe judgement is true, and whoſe teſtimony is ſure.

But firſt it is to be conſidered, what the Law and what the Teſtimony is, and where they are according to the Scripture; *Thy law is light*, Prov. 6. *The law is ſpiritual*, Rom 7. 14. *The law gives the knowledge of ſin*, Rom. 3 20. *And behold the dayes come, ſaith the Lord*, Jer. 31. *that I will make a new Covenant with the houſe of Iſrael, and with the houſe of Judah, not according to the Covenant that I made with their fathers; which Covenant they break, but this ſhall be the Covenant that I will make with them after thoſe dayes: I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts*; And again, Heb. 10. *I will put my laws in their hearts, and in their minds will I write them, and their ſins and iniquities will I remember no more*; and this is the Covenant that makes the comers thereunto perfect, and the Law which makes free from the law of ſin and death; and he that believeth hath this witneſs in himſelf, and ſo hath ſet to his ſeal that God is true, and the teſtimony of Jeſus is the ſpirit of propheſie; and this is that ſure word ſpoken of 2 Pet. 1. 19. *And we have alſo a more ſure word of propheſie whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light that ſhineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day ſtar ariſe in your hearts*; (mark) In your hearts: the Law in the heart, the light in the heart, the teſtimony of Jeſus, the ſure word of propheſie in the heart, the word of faith nigh in the heart. And now to come to the matter, he ſaith, pag. 2. *Chriſt was ſent to ſave his people, and not to ſave onely the oppreſſed ſeed or light within*; to which I ſay, he was ſent to ſet the oppreſſed free, and to ſave his people from their ſins, and to open the eyes of the blind, *m* that thoſe that ſaw not might ſee, *n* and the ſon of man was ſent to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt, and

m John. 9. 39.
n Mat. 18. 11.

the

the Lord of hoſts hath left us a ſeed, elſe *o* we had been as *Sodome*, yea, like unto *Gomorrah*, and this ſeed is *within*: and we know that the whole Creation travelleth together in pain until now, and not onely they but our ſelves alſo that have the firſt fruits of the ſpirit, even we our ſelves have groaned within our ſelves, for the redemption of the body which God hath prepared to do his will, *p* who giveth unto every ſeed its own body, and he that is begotten of the immortal ſeed, and born again of water and of the ſpirit, is ſaved from his ſin, and he ſinneth not, neither can he, becauſe the ſeed of God remaineth in him, and he cannot ſin becauſe he is born of God, 1 *Joh.* 3. Mark, he cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of God, and becauſe the ſeed remaineth *in him.*

o Rom. 9.

p 1 Cor. 15.

But *T.C.* ſaith pages 2, 3. *It is language beſides the Goſpel of truth, that Chriſt came to ſave the oppreſſed ſeed within*; and farther, that he dare ſay, *it is ſuch a ſalvation as never came into the heart of God, nor was ever known to Prophets, Apoſtles, or Chriſt himſelf to ſave the oppreſſed ſeed of God in men, with which his Covenant is made.* Here he hath contradicted the Scriptures of truth above-mentioned, with many others that might be inſtanced; likewiſe he hath contradicted himſelf, for he with others of his brethren, directs their Epiſtle from *Tiverton* to ſuch as are called to be Saints, through the immortal ſeed which dwelleth in them: now if it be language beſides the Goſpel of truth, to mention the oppreſſed ſeed within; why doth he make uſe of the expreſſion? and if it be according to truth, why doth he ſuggeſt that thoſe who uſe ſuch expreſſions, are poor deluded people? and becauſe I ſaid in the beginning of my Epiſtle to them, I am conſtrained with compaſſion to the oppreſſed ſeed in you, which groans to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, &c. he ſeems to render it an offence by falſe conſtructions, ariſing from an evil affected mind, wreſting and perverting my words, and then calling it a mear cheat to pleaſe children and fools, as if it were a language not fit to be ſpoken of, or once named among them that are grown ſo ſtrong in the ſtate of imperfection.

fection. And becauſe my Epiſtle was directed to the Anabaptiſts Churches ſo called, and then I denied them to be the Church of Chriſt, and told them that their preſumption was ſeen that called themſelves the Church of Chriſt and were not, as their blaſphemy was known that called themſelves q Jews and were not. He calls this contradiction and confuſion, but the confuſion is in himſelf, as may appear to the impartial Reader of that Epiſtle. And this I ſay farther, that although they be called, and calls themſelves the Church, yet were they never owned, nor by me called the Church of Chriſt; for as I ſaid before, the Church of Chriſt is as a Lilly among thorns in relation to their condition, expreſſed and confeſſed under their hands in print; and it ſeems they have refuſed to return from their wickedneſs and great abominations, if this man may be credited in what he writes concerning them, page 8. where he denies not, but they are guilty of thoſe ſins expreſſed and confeſſed in their Epiſtle from *Tiverton*; but ſaith, *He truſts they ſhall be found ſo more, if this be to be vile, we ſhall yet be more vile.* Now how can they be more vile then they have rendred themſelves in that one Epiſtle? where they confeſs they have been drawing iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſlaviſh fear hath ſtopt their mouths, till the mouth of this iniquity hath almoſt devoured their poor Churches, &c. and that their affections to Chriſt are alienated, and that the world like a Canker hath eaten out their time, their ſtrength, their zeal, and that the Kingdoms of the world hath bewitched them, ſo that they are become cruel to ſervants and children, exacting all their labours, with many other offences by them confeſſed, which may ſeem to render them vile and uncomely, both in the ſight of God and men, and yet he is ſo impudent as to ſay, *if this be to be vile, I truſt we ſhall be more vile.* Let him that hath moderation judge if this be not to glory in their ſhame, yet they pretend after all this, to take ſome effectual courſe (as they ſay) to purge away ſin, and ſinners out of the houſe of God, which if they do, not one of them will be left, but to them it ſeems unpoſſible to purge away ſin and ſinners, if it be true, which is here affirmed by *T.C.* pag. 7. *they that ſay they are without ſin in this mortal eſtate,*

q Rev. 2 9.

they

they are none of the Church of Christ: and after he hath reviled against what I wrote, concerning the baptism that now saveth, and the great salvation that is begun to be spoken of, he confesseth it to be a blessed truth, and then saith, *it is such a salvation as never entred into the heart of God.*

Should I but search through his writings, and set it in order before him, contradiction and confusion would appear eminently therein, but that is not my work nor intention; neither shall I render unto him or any other evil for evil, and railing for railing, nor make him an offender for a word, nor contend and strive about words, for I have not so learned Christ; and this I know, that there is a witness for God in many of them, that shall confess to the truth of what is by me written, and it shall stand upon true record for ever, though at present he loves not holy things, nor cannot receive pearls, but turns again to tear and rend him that freely offers them, to such as are covering after the best things. But now we shall proceed to his doctrine in opposition to perfection, and the Saints freedom from sin, to which I am called, and constrained to make defence for the truths vindication, as the spirit gives utterance, and first to what he affirms pag. 5. *Now to this I say first as concerning the Church or Churches of Christ, that God never had a Church in the world free from sin, nor were there any durst so to say, except the Pharisees and Hypocrites, the Quakers excepted.*

Oh, from whence is this man fallen? and what is become of all those desires and pressing after perfection that once appeared in him? see his general Epistle to the universal Church; doth he (and his followers) now think to be made perfect in the flesh, that have made so fair a shew of beginning in the spirit, and such large pretences of holiness as he hath done? how hath he mingled himself among the dishonourable vessels of iron and clay, the very feet of the Image? what damnable doctrine is this, that he holds forth in behalf of the Prince of darkness? Surely this will please the man of sin well, to let him be exalted above all that is called God, & to plead his cause and interest in the Church of Christ, to exercise Lordship over Gods heritage, whilst here on earth, for *Sions* sake I

can no longer hold in; for if we ſhould keep ſilence that are called to contend for the faith which purifies the heart, and hear the name of God and his doctrine blaſphemed, the ſtones out of the wall, and beam out of the timber would cry out againſt this wickedneſs, to ſay that God never had a Church here on earth free from ſin. This renders the *r* body of Chriſt not to be without ſin; but let *T. C.* know (whatever he affirm to the contrary) that the Lord hath reſerved ſeven thouſand in *England* that hath not received the mark of the Beaſt in their fore heads, nor in their right hands, nor bowed to his Image, nor defiled themſelves with women, nor with the pollutions of Idols; beſides, a cloud of witneſſes wherewith we are compaſſed about, that in their generation fulfilled the will of God, and walked before him with an upright heart, as doth at large appear in the declaration of truth, which agrees to the exhortation of Chriſt, and the gifts given unto men by Chriſt, who ſaid, *be ye perfect, even as your heavenly father is perfect*, Mat. 5. 48. *who alſo aſcended up on high, led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry, till we all come in the unity of the faith, unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt*, Eph. 4. *And the Miniſter of Chriſt whoſe preaching was not with excellency of ſpeech, nor with the enticing words of mens wiſdom, but in the demonſtration of the ſpirit and of power*; he ſaith of himſelf, and his fellow labourers *ſ we ſpeak wiſdom among them that are perfect*, and their preaching was to the Churches of Chriſt, whilſt in the world, though it is here affirmed that God never had a Church in the world free from ſin, nor none that ever durſt ſo to ſay, except Phariſees and Hypocrites.

Eph. 1. 22, 23

2

1 Cor. 2.

And yet the Apoſtle ſaith concerning himſelf and the Church; *how ſhall we that are dead to ſin live any longer therein, for ſin ſhall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace, being then made free from ſin ye became the ſervants of righteouſneſs*, Rom. 6. t *and ye are compleat in him, who is the head of all principalities and powers, in whom ye are circumciſed with the circumciſion made without hands, in putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh, by the circumciſion*

Col. 2. 10.

of

of Christ; buried with him in Baptisme, wherein also you were raised with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead; and *u Therefore we are buried with him by Baptisme into Death; that like as Christ was raised from the Dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walke in newness of life*: and as hee is, so are we in this present world, 1 *Joh.* 4. and the Church of the *Hebrews* was come *w* to the Spirits of Just men made perfect; and they who testified these things, was not hypocrits as in this mans account; and now I leave it to the spirituall mans judgment; whether ever God had a Church in this world free from sin; or any that durst confess it; yea, or nay; and farther hee affirmes pag. 7. that *they that calls themselves the Church of Christ, and say they are without sin in this mortall Estate, are none of the Church of Christ; for he had never yet any such Church.*

u Rom. 6.

w Heb. 12. 23.

To this I say, his judgment is false and denyed, and declared against by the children of light, and witnessed against by the Scripture of truth; for the Life of Christ hath been, and is made manifest in mortall flesh; and *x* we have this treasure in harth en vessels; and for this purpose was the son of God made manifest to take away sin: *y* and every Spirit that Confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that Spirit of Anti-Christ that now is in the world; but where Jesus Christ is made manifest in the flesh, hee is made manifest to Destroy the works of the Devill, to wit sin; and to condemn sin in the flesh, that the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled *In us* who walks not after the flesh but after the Spirit; being Created again *z* in Christ Jesus unto good works *a* in whom we have Redemption through his blood; who hath purged away our sins, by the washing of Regeneration; glory to his name for ever; without boasting we can speak it to the praise of his grace, who hath wrought all our works for us and *In us*: that *b* wee are of God though the whole world lieth in wickedness; and that Christ have had and yet hath a Church without sin in this mortall Estate; for hee that sinneth hath not seene God neither known him: and we deny all such to be the Church of God, and of Christ as lives in sin, and

x 2 Cor. 4. 7.

y 1 Joh. 4. 3.

z Eph. 2. 10.

a Coll. 1. 4.

b 1 Joh. 5. 19.

pleads for ſin, whilſt in this mortall Eſtate who makes a profeſſion of the Scriptures and comes not to the Life and power declared of by them.

For the Scripture we own and the Covenant which makes the comers thereunto perfect, and the bringing in of a
Rom. 8. 2. better hope we witneſſe, and the Law which makes free c from the Law of ſin and death; and the unchangable ordinances and Adminiſtrations to which we are ſubject, doth not periſh with the uſing; and the Baptiſme by which wee are made members of the Church of Chriſt doth not Decreaſe, but increaſe and ſave from ſin: and all ſuch as are called Churches and yet remains in ſin, in the unconverted and Imperfect Eſtate, offends in many things, and are ſeduced and deceived, being out of the truth, they are enimies to the Croſs of Chriſt in the ſtrife and envy againſt truth; and theſe are not the Church of Chriſt, neither do they know it, but are ſtrangers to the ſaints Life, having a likeneſs of a thing, a forme of godlineſs, but not the power, d a
Rev. 3. 1. name to live and are dead; and with ſuch we have no union; knowing them by their voice to be ſtrangers; and therefore wee turne away from them; and cannot but deale plainely and faithfully with them, though we bee reproched by them with the name of Quakers, and joyned with Phariſees and Hypocrites, becauſe we cannot conforme to the cuſtoms of the Heathen, and plead (as they do) for the Devills kingdom of ſin and Imperfection, that Anti-Chriſt may have quiet poſſeſſion in the Church of Chriſt ſo long as it remaines here in the world.

And becauſe we cannot own them as Miniſters and Elders of the Church of Chriſt that ſometimes murmurs and complaines of the tyrannicall goverment of the man of ſin in them, but pleades for the continuance of ſin in the Church whilſt in this mortall Eſtate; therefore hee concludes that we are not ſenſible of ſin in our ſelves nor in others, as to warn them to mourn and ſeek the Lord for them.

To which I ſay we all like ſheep have gone a ſtray, and in ſin we were conceived, and in iniquity brought forth, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others, till it pleaſed

pleaſed the father in the riches of his grace and love, to reveal his Son in us; to deſtroy the works of the Divell, and to condemen ſin in the fleſh; and by his blood to cleanſe us from all ſin, and we have known the terrours of the Lord, and his indignation againſt ſin, and have been made ſenſible of our condition, whilſt ſin reigned in our mortall Bodies; and wee have mourned under it every familie apart, when by the light of Chriſt it was made manifeſt, and by faith in him many have obtained victory over the ſin that did eaſly beſet us and lead us captive; and how can we that are dead to ſin live any longer therein; *ſhall we continue in ſin* (and plead for ſo doing like you) *that grace may abound, nay, God forbid* that any ſuch thoughts ſhould enter into our hearts, to draw us back to the pollutions which we have eſcaped, and with the dog to the vomet, and the ſow that was waſhed, to her wallowing in the mire again; nay verily we are ſenſible of that condition, and cannot but warn them that yet remains in it, and exhort them to come forth of it; and we do pitty them, and pray for them that they may be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and out of the ſnares of the enemie; and turned from the darkneſs to the light, that as obedient children, they may come to walk honeſtly as in the day in the light of the Lord; and to this end do we labour and travile, and freely adminiſter as we have received, commending our ſelves to that of God in every mans conſcience; again hee ſaith, pag. 9. *let both heaven and earth tremble at ſuch rebellion and pride as this is*; Intimating that we Judge and Condemn all that dare not walk in ſuch a way of diſobedience, &c.

Hear I appeal to all ſober minded people, that ever heard us ſpeak, or read our writings; whether ever we judged or condemned any that was obedient to the faith; or when did we ever preſs any to diſobedience, or did in the leaſt countenance it; but have often declared that the wrath of God cometh upon the children of diſobedience; and ſurely if this man had not a face harder then a flint, I believe ſhame would ſtrike him in the face, at the reading again, in the cool of the day, what hee hath forged againſt us in the heat and bitterneſs of his Spirit; for all that have heard us will be ready with one conſent to ſay, that we preſs moſt after obedience,

of any other profeſſion or people whatſoever, and we have ſure ground for ſo doing: knowing that the promiſe of the Lord and his bleſſing is to the obedient: and that the terrors of the Lord, and his wrath is againſt the *e* children of diſobedience; and our teſtimony ſtands upon record againſt all ſuch as *f* rebells againſt the light, and againſt all who are proud, heady and *high minded*, *Diſobedient to parents*, *without naturall affection*, ſuch as are *g* bewitched and doth not obey the truth as it is in Jeſus.

e Col. 3. 6.

f Job. 24. 13.
g Gal. 3. 1.

And to ſay that wee walk in a way of diſobedience is utterly falſe: for our way is the good old way of holineſs. Jeſus Chriſt who ſaith I am the light of the world, and *h* he that followeth me ſhall not abide in darkneſs, but ſhall have the light of life, and his record is true, and we have believed it; and again, he ſaith *i* I am the way, and no man cometh to the father but by me; and of this way we bear teſtimony, and in this way we walk, and whoſoever ſaith they believe in Chriſt, and followes Chriſt, and doth not believe in the light, and walk in obedience to the light, are deceived and led aſide with the errour of the wicked, and are in the rebellion and diſobedience, and ſuch with the light are judged and *k* condemned, and by us declared againſt in that eſtate of diſobedience; yet we cannot ceaſe to call them to repentance, that if peradventure they may come to the knowledge of the truth: but he ſaith pag. 11. *that they endeavour to turn ſouls from Chriſt to the light within them, teaching abſolute diſobedience and rebellion againſt Chriſt in his word the Scriptures; and obedience to their own fancies; and lying imaginations within them.*

h John. 8. 12.
i John. 14. 6.
k John. 3. 19.

To which I ſay; this is but his own falſe conſtruction and vain imaginations mixt with Ignorance and enmity; for the Scripture is a witneſs with us of what we teach and of what we believe; and endeavour to turn people unto, and he might as well have accuſed the Miniſters of Chriſt as us in this particular; for they were ſent *l* to turn people from the darkneſs to the light; and in ſo doing, neither they nor we did nor doth endeavour to turn them to fancies; nor teach them rebellion againſt Chriſt in his word, this is but the poyſon of Aſps that cometh from under his tongue; and we can bear it;

l Acts. 26. 18.

being

being exerciſed with the reproaches of *Moab*, and the reviſeings of the Children of *Ammon*, with whom this man hath joyned himſelf to fight againſt the truth; yet notwithſtanding for the truths defence and vindication, this may inform the ſimple hearted, that are not come to a right underſtanding of what we hold and teach, that we do not endeavour to turn ſouls to a light within them diſtinct from Chriſt; but we labour to turn people to the true light of Chriſt *in them*; *m* for God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs hath ſhined in our hearts; and this is the true light which we have ſeen and which we declare, and endeavour to turn people to, and this is the light which *John* was ſent to bear witneſs of, *that all men through him might believe* n *the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world*: and this is not a fancy nor an imagination, as is falſly affirmed by *T. C.* who farther proceeds to call it a natural light, and the ruins or remainders of that which was in the firſt *Adam*; and ſaith *it is the great deſign of theſe men to ſet it up in oppoſition to the true light and life of Chriſt, &c.* but this alſo is his own blindneſs and ignorance, of what wee labour to ſet up that cauſeth the miſtake and falſe judgement, for we labour to turn people to the true ſpiritual light of the ſecond *Adam*, who is the Lord from heaven heavenly; that as they have ſinned through one mans diſobedience, they may by the obedience of one be made free from ſin and death; and to this end are we called and ſent forth in the name of the Lord, to call ſinners to repentance that are in the loſt eſtate in the firſt *Adam*; and to turn people from the darkneſs to the true light, that they may come to worſhip the onely true God (whom we worſhip) in the ſpirit and in the truth, and this is the work of our Miniſtery; having turned people from the darkneſs to the light, to ſtir up the pure mind *in them* by daily exhortations and provocations to love and obedience to him, who hath required truth in the inward parts; that holineſs may be *o* perfected in the fear of God; that their light (which doth ſhine) may ſhine clearer and clearer before men, that thereby the Lord may be glorified, and the mouths of gain-ſayers ſtopped; and herein have we union with the elders of whom the world was not worthy: who ſuſtained the ſame

m 2 Cor. 4. 6.

n John. 1.

o 2 Cor. 7. 1.

same sufferings, reproaches, and tryals of cruel mockings, bonds and imprisonments (as wee do) for the testimony which they held, and by the same power are we kept through faith unto salvation; so that we can rejoyce when men reviles and persecutes us for Christs sake and the Gospel; knowing that if our Gospel be hid, *it is hid to them that are lost*; p *whose minds the God of this world hath blinded*, and whose ears with the deaf Adder are stopped; that although we speak plainly according to the Scripture, and declare what we have heard and seen, yet it cannot be received by such as are given up to believe lies; and truly this man hath manifested as much enmity and ignorance herein against us, as if he had sold himself to work wickedness, and bent his tongue for lies; he calls them horrid abuses against Christ, Scripture and Saints, that I would have the light within, to be believed in and loved, and because I call Christ the *true seed*, the *true light*, *the Lord*, *the Law giver*, *the more sure word of Prophesy*, &c. he makes it as some hainous offence, and labours to make a separation between Christ and his light in the consciences of men and women, which upon good grounds we exhort people to turn unto, believe in, love and obey: for God hath given him for q *a light unto the Gentiles*, *a leader of his people*, *and for salvation to all the ends of the earth*, *to open the eyes of the blind*, *and to bring forth the prisoners out of the prison houses*; end this is our message to the world to declare r that God is *light*, and in him is no darkness at all, and to turn people from the darkness to this *light*, that they may be brought out of the estate of degeneration and imperfection where they have lain covered with gross darkness, feeding themselves with the hypocrites hope and empty shadowes as of a light without; a word without; Christ without; A Church without; baptism without; bread and wine without; ordinances and administrations all without; *which makes not the commers thereunto perfect*; being carnally observed according to traditions received from men: and that which most agravates their misery; they are self conceited, and will not hearken to the reproofs of instruction, nor receive the things of the Spirit of God when freely tendered and offered without money and without price.

p 2 Cor. 4. 3.

q Luk. 2. 37.

r 1 John. 1. 5.

Oh

Oh that you did but know the desires and breathings that procceds from the spirit that *ever lives to make intercession unto God for you; why will you spend your money for that which is no bread and your labour for that which doth not satisfy? how long will you make lies your refuge*, and feed upon ashes, and cover your selves with unrighteous coverings? the flying Angel is gone forth with the everlasting Gospel to preach to all nations, kinreds, tongues and languages, and the call hath reached unto you that have been asleep *s* in the dust of the earth: Therefore harden not your hearts but incline your eares, and hearken diligently what the spirits saith, and take heed of *t* neglecting this great salvation, for this is the day of your visitation; and once more a word of exhortation to you as from the Lord to return to *u* the light and believe in the light, and love the light, &c. *w* walke in it that you may have fellowship with us, and that you may be received into the generall assembly, where the only true God is worshipped in the spirit and truth *x* in the beauty of holiness: but he saith pag. 13. *we know it is an easy thing to be received by them without any letters of recommendation, for if a man will but turn away from Christ, and faith, and scriptures, and obedience, and turne to the light within, and say he is perfect, and can say thee and thou, he may quickly be one of their Church, &c.*

s Dan. 12. 2.
t Heb. 2.
u Joh. 12. 3
w Rev. 21. 2
x Psa. 29. 2.

But truely he is deceived herein; for its not so easy to be a member of our Church (which is the true Church) as he ignorantly pretends; though the gates be not at all shut by day, yet there can in no wise enter *any thing that defileth and is polluted*; nor no *prophane person*, neither *whatsoever worketh abomination*: y *for without are dogs, and drunkards, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and swearers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lye*: and its death to any beast, that comes near the mountain of the Lords house, which is established in the top of all mountains: z and exalted above the hills, where we *worship God in the spirit* in the true order and fellowship, where all may speak *a* one by one as the spirit moves and gives utterance: and if any of the adulterated generation should come among us from a far country, and bring a letter of recommendation from some great man of the world, or from an assembly of professing

y Rev. 22. 15
z Isay. 2.
a 1 Cor. 14.

people; his ſpirit would ſoon be tryed whether he were of
Joh.4.1. God or not; for we cannot *b believe* nor receive *every ſpirit* that may come with *excellency of ſpeech, and the inticing words of mens wiſdom*, and be commended by men, and pais for a good Chriſtian in the worlds account; for we know the voice
Joh.10.5. of Chriſt *c* and *ſtrangers we cannot hearken to*; And as for ſuch as turnes away from Chriſt, faith and obedience, they are more like to be received by, and to find acceptance among the Anabaptiſts (then among us) if they will but take up their great ordinance as they call it (to wit) water Baptiſm, the ſecond or third time, and make Confeſſion of their ſins, that light ſpirit, that wretched worldly ſpirit, &c. They muſt be owned as brethren and ſiſters, Chriſts excellent ones, although they be cruell to children and ſervants, mockers of God, &c. See a large deſcription of the Eſtate of their Church in their Epiſtle from *Tiverton*, and look abroad among all profeſſions in the nation, if worſe fruits can be found then is brought forth among them; but how can we expect better till the vineyard be dreſſed by huſbandmen of the Lords calling and ſending; its manifeſt they ran and was not ſent; and therefore the people are not profited by them; and truly its far eaſier to be a member of ſuch an imperfect Church as theirs, the way being ſo wide, then it is to be of ours;
1 Cor. 12.13 for the way is ſtraight that leads to it, *d* the Baptiſme being ſpirituall by which they are received in, and *the naturall man cannot receive the things of the ſpirit of God:* and the words *thee* and *thou* doth not make a member of the true Church; neither are they the principle of our Religion, for they may be uſed in the deceipt, as well as the truth may be holden in unrighteouſneſs, though they be proper and pure language, and by us uſed and owned, yet let none think that our Religion depends only upon words, but that we are builded upon the ſure foundation of many generations for an habitation of God
Eph.2.20.22 through the ſpirit *e Chriſt Jeſus himſelf being the chief corner ſtone*: and many that pretends to Religion in theſe dayes, and profeſſes the ſcripture for a rule, are ſo far from coming to be of our Church, that a word of exhortation can hardly have entrance among them; neither can the ſcripture language be born by *T.C.* and his adherents; for becauſe I ſaid *the Law is*

t changed,

t changed, and the Prieſthood is changed, and *the Covenant which made not the commers thereunto perfect*, for *the weakneſſe and unprofitableneſs of it is done away*; &c. he ſaith, *take theſe words as they are ſtated, and they ſpeak forth moſt horrible iniquity*, though they be ſtated expreſly as they run in Scripture; *and*, ſaith he, *the ordinances that we walke in are the new teſtament ordinances grounded upon the new teſtament Covenant*; but truly its very unlike, ſeeing their Covenant and ordinances doth not make the comers thereunto perfect, which thing he denyes both in Epiſtle and practice, as is plainly manifeſt to the children of light; And ſhould I but trace him through his Epiſtle from *Tiverton*; and this imperfect piece written as a vindication of it; and their Churches imperfect Eſtate; a Large volume would but contain the particular circumſtances; but I ſhall refer the reader to that Epiſtle, and mine in perſuance of it, which was not written by me to the intent of ſtrife, or contention about words, but in the feare of the Lord, by way of exhortation to repentance; after I had deliberatly read over and conſidered the ſtate of their Church under their hands in print, and although I did write in love and tenderneſs, and in plainneſs of ſpeech, and in Engliſh; yet *T. C.* pretends to interpret it, to make it ſpeake another thing then is intended; and when he hath ſet down his own falſe conſtructions and interpretations, he calls it our Logick; and ſo ſports himſelfe in his own deceivings; and then ſaith he, *I truſt that every tender and faithfull ſoul, that trembles at the word of the Lord, will tremble at the thoughts of the reception of ſuch divinity as this is*: which is nothing but a falſe divination of his own heart, for thoſe that trembles at the word of the Lord, doth little approve of his divinitie; its more pleaſing among, and more delightful to them that cannot indure ſound Doctrine, and they can well agree with, and approve of ſuch teachers as will countenance ſin, and plead for the being and living in ſin, whilſt in this mortall Eſtate.

f Heb. 7.

But to preſs after holineſs, perfection and obedience to the light of Chriſt *Within*, Oh this is a hard ſaying, the land cannot beare ſuch language; *away with ſuch a fellow, its not fit hee ſhould* breathe in the ayr or live upon the earth: *he brings certain ſtrange things to our eares, this is a new Doctrine*, he

tels us of a light within us, but this is a naturall light (ſay they) this is not the light of Chriſt; for when Chriſt cometh, no man knoweth whence he is, but we know of this light in us; let us heare of ſomething that we know not, and tell not us of a light within us that reproves for ſin, and convinces of ſin; and thus the day of ſmall things is diſpiſed, and the reproofs of inſtruction ſet at nought, and the firſt principle of pure Religion ſlighted as too meane and too low things for ſuch high ſpirits to ſtoop to in theſe dayes.

And becauſe out of a true ſence of their miſerable Eſtate and condition, expreſſed in their Epiſtle, I ſaid to the ſimple hearted *come out from among them, and be ye ſeperated*, leaſt you periſh in their gainſaying, he ſaith, *this is the great worke of all, Phariſee-like, to compaſs ſea and land to make one proſelyte*; now let the underſtanding and wiſe hearted judge, if I have offended herein, and whether it be not ſafe to come out from among them that are formall in holy duties, and without the terrour of Gods Majeſty, &c. as they are by their own Confeſſion.

Was it Phariſee-like when the true Prophet called to a people to come out from among them that lived in ſin, and not pertake with them any longer therein, leaſt they alſo ſhould pertake of their punniſhment? and is it an offence now, to call the ſimple hearted to come out from among them that lives in ſin, and pleads for the continuance of it? ſo long as they remaine in this world, and the Miniſter of Chriſt ſaith g that thoſe who had *the forme of godlineſs*, and *not the power*, was to be turned away from; *for what concord hath Chriſt with Beliall, or what communion hath light with Darkneſſe, or what agreement hath the temple of God with Idolls, for ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath ſaid, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; wherefore come out from among them and be ſeperate, and touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you, and ye ſhall be my ſons and daughters ſaith the Lord Almighty*, 2 *Cor.* 6. and this was not Phariſee-like to make a proſylite, and, he ſaith, *but why muſt they come out from amongſt us*? to which I ſhall here anſwer in plaine Engliſh, and ſo ſave him labour to interpret; firſt, becauſe they have not profited by your Miniſtry, as you Confeſs you have laboured in vain, and that which hath been brought

Tim. 3 5.

forth

forth hath been to little purpoſe: Secondly, becauſe you have *h the forme of godlineſs and not the power thereof*, and doth impoſe ſuch ordinances upon them, *as doth not make the commers thereunto perfect*. Thirdly becauſe of your coldneſs and deadneſs, that indifferency and *Laodicean* ſpirit that is fallen in upon you: Fourthly, becauſe you have been *drawing iniquity with cords of vanity*, whilſt you have ſaid, *Let the Counſell of the Lord come that we may know it*; in a word, becauſe your Church hath ſin remaining in it, and you believe it will never be otherwiſe whilſt you are in this mortall Eſtate; ſo that your Miniſtry is not *for the perfecting of the ſaints i* the ends for which Chriſt gave Giftes to his Miniſters; and again he ſaith, *whether muſt they come, doubtleſs to them a pure perfect people without ſin*;

h 2 Tim. 3. 5.

i Eph. 4.

I ſay yea, unto a people *k* ſaved by the Lord, ſaved from their ſins, ſaved from the untoward generation, with a great and mighty ſalvation: to ſuch a people are they called to come, to the generall aſſembly, to the Church which is in God; to a pure people, *l* to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, that they may be the Lords in the day *m* when he makes up his jewells; for now he is bringing in the deſire of all nations, who ſaith *to the ſea, give up*, and the light is riſen out of obſcurity and we have ſeene it, and now the Lord is gathering his ſeed from the eaſt, and from the weſt; *n* who ſaith *to the north give up*, and *to the ſouth keep not back, bring my ſons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth*, bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have eares, and let the nations be aſſembled, for now is ſalvation and ſtrength come, and we cannot be ſilent, but freely invite and exhort the ſimple hearted to come up with us to the houſe of the Lord.

k Deut. 33. 29.

l Heb. 12. 23.

m Mal. 3. 7.

n Iſay. 43.

And therefore I ſay again, *o Come let us walk in the light of the Lord, come with me from Lebanon; in vain is ſalvation hoped for from the hills, or from the multitude of mountains; ariſe and come away, look from the top of Amana, come from the Lions den, and from the mountains of Leopards, come up out of Egypt and Babylon, enquire the way to Sion, ſeek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near*; come up hither to worſhip God in the ſpirit and in the truth, and ſeek not the living among the dead, *p The ſpirit and the bride ſaith come, and who*.

o Iſay. 2. 5.

p Rev. 22. 17.

whosoever will come, let him come to the waters freely, and drink without money and without price.

This word is to you that are athirst, and to you that are tender-hearted in plainness to your understandings (and not the voice of a strange women) therefore hearken diligently, and be not as the untamed Heifer, snuffing up and feeding upon the wind; come off the barren mountains, where you have been wandering in the cloudy and dark day, and turn to the light of Christ Jesus (in all your consciences) who hath sent forth Pastors according to his own heart, to administer freely, as they have freely received, and to turn people from the darkness to the light: Let not a deceived heart lead you aside, to heap up to your selves Teachers, that cannot profit, and so neglect this great salvation; to that of God in all your consciences I commend these things, to be answered with obedience to him, that you may also come to have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and the Son, in the light of life, which the Scripture is a witness of, and the true Christ, *q* the hope of glory (in us) we witness, and of him we bear testimony, and for that faith *r* which was once delivered to the Saints, which purifies the heart, do we earnestly contend; and in humility we can say, that we have denyed self in obedience to Christ, who is the resurrection and the life, and he that is wise, let him turn in hither, for he that is of God heareth us, but they that are of the world heareth us not, because they have not heard nor known the Father and the Son, of whom we bear testimony, by whose grace we are saved.

q Col. 1. 27.
r Jude 3.

And now if any among the Anabaptists, or any other form whatsoever have but moderation, to read this with the spirit and understanding, they may have true information, without an interpreter, wherefore they are called to arise, and come out of the state of imperfection, and unto whom they must come, that they may find rest for their souls, and refreshment from Gods presence, and let none be so fooliſh as to think that this doctrine will seduce or deceive them, for we have the mind of Christ, and *ſ* we preach wisdom among them that are perfect, and we press after perfection: wherefore I say,

ſ 1 Cor. 2. 6.

let

of truth, that you may prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.

Ivelchester the 12 *day of the* 1 *Moneth*, 1658. T. S.

A Lamentation *taken up for the Churchs of the Anabaptists by* John Collens with a call, and warning *for them to come out of the* self separation, *into the foot-steps of the flock, and to turn from the* darkness *to the* true light.

FRiends, you who call your selves Churches of Christ Jesus, who have separated your selves not having the spirit to lead, and separate you from your uncleannes, and so are in the self separation, out of the power of God, which power maketh man willing to deny himself and take up the daily cross which crucifieth him to the world, and the world to him, where sin is nailed, and the power of God received, to resist the Devil, which leads them captive at his will, who live in sin and transgression, which is the work of the Devil, and all them that are led by him have not received the faith, which giveth victory over him, nor have not believed the Gospel, which is *the power of God to salvation*, nor received Christ Jesus, *to save them from their sins* which all they that do believe, do receive even *power to become the sons of God, and joynt heirs with Christ.*

Friends, in the Name and fear of the Lord God Almighty, do I warn you, and in bowels of love and tenderness do in Christs stead beseech you, that in the light of Christ Jesus made manifest, which never changeth, but bears true testimony for God, try and consider, whether whilst you *live in sin, you are not servants to sin, and doth the work of the Devil: and the wages of sin is death, and he that soweth to the flesh must of the flesh reap corruption, and he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting, you cannot serve two masters, neither can you serve God and Mammon, verily verily except you be born again you cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, and he that is born of God cannot sin, for his seed remaineth in him, he that sinneth is of the Devil*; now friends in the coolenes and moderation consider,

Whosoever will come, let him come to the waters freely, and drink without money and without price.

This word is to you that are athirst, and to you that are tender-hearted in plainness to your understandings (and not the voice of a strange women) therefore hearken diligently, and be not as the untamed Heifer, snuffing up and feeding upon the wind; come off the barren mountains, where you have been wandering in the cloudy and dark day, and turn to the light of Christ Jesus (in all your consciences) who hath sent forth Pastors according to his own heart, to administer freely, as they have freely received, and to turn people from the darkness to the light: Let not a deceived heart lead you aside, to heap up to your selv and so neglect this great salva consciences I commend these bedience to him, that you m with us, and truly our fellow Son, in the light of life, whi and the true Christ, *q* the hop and of him we bear testimony once delivered to the Saints, earnestly contend; and in hu denyed self in obedience to C and the life, and he that is w he that is of God heareth us, heareth us not, because they h Father and the Son, of whom grace we are saved.

q Col. 1. 27.
r Jude 3.

And now if any among th whatsoever have but moderat and understanding, they ma an interpreter, wherefore th out of the state of imperfection, and unto whom they must come, that they may find rest for their souls, and refreshment from Gods presence, and let none be so fooliſh as to think that this doctrine will seduce or deceive them, for we have the mind of Christ, and *ſ* we preach wisdom among them that are perfect, and we press after perfection: wherefore I say, let

ſ 1 Cor. 2. 6.

PAG
MISS

of truth, that you may prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.

Ivelchester the 12 *day of the* 1 *Moneth*, 1658. **T. S.**

A Lamentation *taken up for the Churchs of the Anabaptists by* John Collens with a call, and warning *for them to come out of the* self separation, *into the foot-steps of the flock, and to turn from the* darkness *to the* true light.

[illegible] your selves Churches of Christ Jesus, your selves not having the spirit to [illegible]m your uncleannes, and so are in the power of God, which power maketh [illegible]elf and take up the daily cross which [illegible]d, and the world to him, where sin is [illegible]od received, to resist the Devil, which [illegible]ill, who live in sin and transgression, [illegible]evil, and all them that are led by faith, which giveth victory over [illegible] the Gospel, which is *the power of* [illegible]ed Christ Jesus, *to save them from* [illegible]t do believe, do receive even *power* [illegible]*d joynt heirs with Christ.*

[illegible]nd fear of the Lord God Almighty, [illegible]wels of love and tenderness do in [illegible]hat in the light of Christ Jesus made [illegible]ngeth, but bears true testimony for [illegible]ther whilst you *live in sin, you are not* [illegible]*work of the Devil: and the wages of sin is death, and he that soweth to the flesh must of the flesh reap corruption, and he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting, you cannot serve two masters, neither can you serve God and Mammon, verily verily except you be born again you cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, and he that is born of God cannot sin, for his seed remaineth in him, he that sinneth is of the Devil*; now friends in the coolenes and moderation consider,

Whosoever will come, let him come to the waters freely, and drink without money and without price.

This word is to you that are athirst, and to you that are tender-hearted in plainness to your understandings (and not the voice of a strange women) therefore hearken diligently, and be not as the untamed Heifer, snuffing up and feeding upon the wind; come off the barren mountains, where you have been wandering in the cloudy and dark day, and turn to the light of Christ Jesus (in all your consciences) who hath sent forth Pastors according to his own heart, to administer freely, as they have freely received, and to turn people from the darkness to the light: Let not a deceived heart lead you aside, to heap up to your selves Teachers, that cannot profit, and so neglect this great salvation; to that of God in all your consciences I commend these things, to be answered with obedience to him, that you may also come to have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and the Son, in the light of life, which the Scripture is a witness of, and the true Christ, *q* the hope of glory (in us) we witness, and of him we bear testimony, and for that faith *r* which was once delivered to the Saints, which purifies the heart, do we earnestly contend; and in humility we can say, that we have denyed self in obedience to Christ, who is the resurrection and the life, and he that is wise, let him turn in hither, for he that is of God heareth us, but they that are of the world heareth us not, because they have nor heard nor known the Father and the Son, of whom we bear testimony, by whose grace we are saved.

q Col. 1. 27.
r Jude 3.

And now if any among the Anabaptists, or any other form whatsoever have but moderation, to read this with the spirit and understanding, they may have true information, without an interpreter, wherefore they are called to arise, and come out of the state of imperfection, and unto whom they must come, that they may find rest for their souls, and refreshment from Gods presence, and let none be so fooliſh as to think that this doctrine will seduce or deceive them, for we have the mind of Christ, and *ſ* we preach wisdom among them that are perfect, and we press after perfection: wherefore I say,

ſ 1 Cor. 2. 6.

let

of truth, that you may prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.

Ivelchester the 12 *day of the* 1 *Moneth*, 1658. T. S.

A Lamentation *taken up for the Churchs of the Anabaptists by* John Collens with a call, and warning *for them to come out of the* self separation, *into the foot-steps of the flock, and to turn from the* darkness *to the* true light.

FRiends, you who call your selves Churches of Christ Jesus, who have separated your selves not having the spirit to lead, and separate you from your uncleannes, and so are in the self separation, out of the power of God, which power maketh man willing to deny himself and take up the daily cross which crucifieth him to the world, and the world to him, where sin is nailed, and the power of God received, to resist the Devil, which leads them captive at his will, who live in sin and transgression, which is the work of the Devil, and all them that are led by him have not received the faith, which giveth victory over him, nor have not believed the Gospel, which is *the power of God to salvation*, nor received Christ Jesus, *to save them from their sins* which all they that do believe, do receive even *power to become the sons of God, and joynt heirs with Christ.*

Friends, in the Name and fear of the Lord God Almighty, do I warn you, and in bowels of love and tenderness do in Christs stead beseech you, that in the light of Christ Jesus made manifest, which never changeth, but bears true testimony for God, try and consider, whether whilst you *live in sin, you are not servants to sin, and doth the work of the Devil: and the wages of sin is death, and he that soweth to the flesh must of the flesh reap corruption, and he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting, you cannot serve two masters, neither can you serve God and Mammon, verily verily except you be born again you cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, and he that is born of God cannot sin, for his seed remaineth in him, he that sinneth is of the Devil*; now friends in the coolenes and moderation consider,

whether you know this birth brought forth in you which cannot commit sin, the seed immortal begotten of God, which enters the Kingdom of God; and try your selves how you stand in the presence of the Lord; in singleness of heart, and deceive not your selves with words; *for the gospel is not in word but in power*; a profession of God and Christ will not save you whilst you deny the power of God, by which sin is crucified, *for whosoever committeth sin is under the Law*: and he was made manifest to take away our sins, truly a lamentation is taken up for you, *how are you fallen, how are your garments defiled*; how are you degenerated and fallen back to the love of the world with its customes, fashioned and traditions, with the lusts and vanities thereof, renewing again those idolatries which formerly you have destroyed, how is your leader and great Apostle amongst you, *Thomas Collier*, become an enemy of righteousness *resisting the holy Ghost*: *and perverting the right way of God*, preaching up sin and imperfection for term of life, going about with all the strength he can muster up to establish the kingdom of the Devil in the Church of Christ, raking up the failings of the Saints recorded, to confirm the reign of the man of sin for ever, condemning the generation of the just, bringing in new destinctions to make the body of Christ an imperfect sinful body, how doth he blaspheme God & his tabernacle, and them that dwell in Heaven, *who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect*, how doth he slander, reproach and falsly accuse the innocent and harmless Lambs of Christ Jesus, yea the Lord is witness between him & us, *and we call Heaven and earth to witness against him this day*, that these things * asserted by him as our principles never entered into our hearts, our consciences bearing us witness in the sight of God, though he like a whore hath wiped his mouth at a looking glass, in which the children of light see much more of his deformity and wickedness; having perverted the words in several books as he doth *the Scriptures to his own destruction*, and out of his mischievous heart, hath wrested their honest intents, and taken pieces of sentences and raised it up a lie (out of his own wicked heart) upon them, and then overturned his own work; but that which

* In his book called *a dialogue between a minister and a Christian.*

which is written in thoſe books remaineth untouched by him, his own lies being but wiped from them, as any who are without prejudice may eaſily ſee, reading over the things contained in thoſe books who will ſufficiently clear themſelves, but the Devil *who was a lyer from the beginning, is now caſt out of heaven into the earth, and he hath great wrath with the woman, and the remnant of her ſeed who keep the word of God and teſtimony of Jeſus; but the arm of the Lord is ſtretched out over us, and in his fear are we preſerved from the rage of our enemies,* yea *a pillar of fire to give us light* goeth before us, which is a cloud and darkneſs to our *Egyptian* like enemies that follow after us:

Truly my ſoul pitties you, and my bowels hath even yerned on you, for many dayes; oh that you had an ear that you could hear, and an heart that you could underſtand: you have played the harlot and are departed from God, and you have joyned your ſelves to another beſides the Lord, *you have run a whoreing after your own Inventions, and you have worſhipped the works of your hands,* and your Paſtours hath deceived you, for the Lord doth not ſmile upon you, *but his jealouſy burneth againſt you as a fire,* yet return and he may have mercy, and whilſt the Spirit of the Lord ſtrives, anſwer with obedience; for he hath ſaid *his ſpirit ſhall not alwayes ſtrive with man,* and while you have the light, believe in the light, and bring all your deeds unto the light that they may be proved and tryed, whether they be wrought in God.

And now friends in the fear of the Lord deal honeſtly with your own ſelves, and let us reaſon together, and in the light of Chriſt Jeſus weigh and try all things, and ſee with the light (which will deal plainly with you) whether you are indeed ſuch as you profeſs your ſelves; and whether the ordinances you ſo much talk of be indeed the ordinances of Chriſt, or but ſhadowes, whether water baptiſm or *the baptiſm of the ſpirit be the baptiſm of Chriſt,* ſince *there is but one baptiſm,* whether you have *heard the voice of Chriſt or ſeen his ſhape at any time,* that hath commanded you in the particular to take up thoſe ordinances, or a perſwaſion in your own minds from the letter when as the letter killeth, or whether ſuch a thing as water be commanded in the letter, or your own Imaginations from the letter.

Whether the bread you break be the body of Christ, or the cup you drink be his blood, since it doth not cleanse you from sin? whether the prayers you make be in the spirit, and you can say in the presence of the Lord, you lift up holy hands; have them that teach among you the spirit of infalibility, and revelation of the mind of Christ, or they speak a devination of their own brain, and hath not received the word of the Lord from his mouth, but boast in anothers line, and what themselves have invented, and whether this be the spirit of God, or the spirit of errour which is not of God; and whether the Covenant, and ordinances which doth not make the commers thereunto perfect, be not that which is to be done away as weake and unprofitable? whether your faith and preaching be not also vain, forasmuch as you believe you shall never overcome sin while you live, and your faith doth not purifie your hearts, and since that as a tree falleth so it lyeth, and as death leaves you judgment finds you, and that there is no repentance in the grave whether you must goe, and that nothing that is unclean, or that worketh abomination, or that maketh a lye shall ever enter the City of our God.

Therefore once more in the name of the Lord I warn you, come out from among them, all ye that are tender-hearted, and that desires salvation to your soules *come out from among them, and be ye seperate, and touch no unclean thing. and I will receive you saith the Lord*, for whosoever cannot witnesse Christ Jesus a Saviour from sin in the particular, shall never witness him a Saviour from condemnation, & refuse not to walk with a pure perfect people, as *T. C.* saith we be, and follow us no farther then as we follow Christ, for we have the mind of Christ; therfore own the light which convinceth you of sin, for as living witnesses for the name of our God do we stand, that the light which convinceth of sin is the true light that leadeth out of sin, all them that walks in the light, as he is in the light, they witness the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin, which joyns us to Christ as members of his body, whereby we receive the spirit of the Father, to lead and guide us to do his will, which is our sanctification, which spirit revealeth the Son, Christ Jesus the light, who worketh all our works in us, and for us,

whose

whose work is perfect, for we are no more our own, but bought with a price; so are we baptized by one spirit into one body, and made conformable to his death, who hath raised us to life, glory be to his name for ever: here is the Church in God the Father, where the true Church, Ordinances and fellowship is known, and the true worship in spirit and in truth (in which onely the father is worshipped) lived in; yea, and we bear testimony according to the Scriptures, that there is no other name given under heaven by which men can be saved, but by Christ Jesus, who is revealed in us, our hope of glory; this is he that hath told us all that ever we have done: is not this the very Christ, who was in the beginning with God, whose day *Abraham* saw, whom the professing Jews (when made manifest) who had the Scriptures of the Prophets (who prophesied of him) read every Sabbath day, yet their voices they knew not, but crucified the Lord of Life, and put him to open shame, as it is at this day; *Him hath God raised, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow*; this is he whom we bear testimony to, *Christ Jesus the same yesterday, to day and for ever*; therefore take heed least ye be found fighters against God, and no longer believe lyes, but cast out the lyar from amongst you, for the lyar is of the Devil, and whilst you join with him, you are one with him, and must partake of his plagues. Therefore hear and fear before the Lord, for the *Lord will rain snares upon the wicked, and pour out shame and contempt upon his adversaries*; and go on speedily with your promise which you have promised the Lord in your Epistle, That *you will cast out sin or sinners out of the house of God*, so may the Lord have a Church free from sin upon the earth, for he is come whose right it is, and the Kingdom and the Government shall be his, who will rule the Heathen with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a Potters vessel. And now have I eased my spirit, and cleared my conscience towards you, whether you will hear or forbear, and the Lord will be clear of you, when he cometh in ten thousands of his Saints to execute the judgements written; *this honour hath all the saints.*

From

From [illegible] who was once owned as a Brother amongst you, and [illegible] owned a brother by you, whilst walking in the vanities of my mind running to the same excess of riot with you; but since the Lord in mercy visited me, and called me out of darkness, into his marvellous light, I have been hated and despightfully used by some of you, who am known to many of you by the name of,

I. C.

FINIS.